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**Abstract of the Disclosure**

5        A method for certifying the public key of a digital postage meter using a public  
key encryption system by a certifying authority. A certifying station and a user station, or  
a digital postage meter, exchange information and the user station and downloads, or the  
meter derives, a public key from the exchanged information. The certifying station also  
publishes related information and its public key. A third party can derive the public key  
10       corresponding to the meter's private key by operating on the published information with  
the certifying station public key.